"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

The Christian Freeman.

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MY NEIGHBOUR'S HENS.

THERE are perplexities and cares for which philosophy affords no balm, for which even the consolations of religion prove insufficient.

A short time since we saw a statement in the paper that a poor old German in one of your manufacturing towns had, in despair, hung himself, and left a note explaining the catastrophe, by saying that his neighbour's hens had made life intolerable.

The poor man it seems, like many another of the Teutonic race, had embodied his heart in a flower-garden. He had a thousand nerves that grew in every vine and palpitated in every unfolding bud and flower, and over all these throbbing nerves walked his neighbour's hens, "craw-crawing" in indolent nonchalance, while they pecked out his very vitals. Poor Hans! Can we wonder at the catastrophe?

Yet no one can fully appreciate it that has not in his own person lived the plant life and flower life, and known the vibration of the green-growing nerves that make the gardener's heart one with the plant he rears. It is his life that keeps them living. It is his vitality that goes into them from day to day—there is a transfusion of his personal self into them, so that he feels hot and cold, wet and dry, sunshine and shade no longer like a man but like a plant.

Imagine now a self-gratulatory, pharisaic, self-sufficient old hen, walking forth in the garden of his delight, clucking and scratching with that easy air of self-conceit for which hens are remarkable.

For hens are peculiar for this stolid, obtuse form of self-assertion, that not only has no ideas of any rights but their own, but has not a head big enough to receive a new idea when you try to get it in. See the wretches as they go among Hans' flower-beds! Every flower there has a history of labours and desires, of plans and hopes, that began the winter back, when Hans sowed the little seeds in little pots in his shop-window, and watched, and watered, and yearned, and hoped, and feared through all the cold winter hours, till he was ready to set them out for his summer glorification.

Scratch, scratch, goes Madam Boltongrey, chatting confidentially to Mrs. Chittygong, who scratches in her turn. Up flies a geranium, the sole of its species! and lies with its roots quivering in the sunshine, up fly schizanthus pinks, gillyflowers! while the easy-chatting matrons scoop great, deep, round holes in the flower-beds, and throw the dirt up over their backs in the most contented manner possible. They call through the fence to young Mrs. Dorking to come with her twenty chickens and take possession, "It is capital ground here, exactly fitted for hens to burrow in and feed their families."

One fancies the easy air of superiority with which a hen would be told of her sins. "Scratched up geraniums! did you say? Well, so much the worse for them! What were they in my way for? No harm done, any way. Who cares for them? Who ever found anything good to eat in a geranium, or a sweet pea, or a mignonette bed? It's perfectly surprising that anybody can't see that I needed to burrow just where they grew, and besides, life is made to pick up worms in, and if you are not diligent they get ahead of you. Show me a worm or a bug that escapes my notice now!"

When Hans came home in a fury, and stormed, and raved, and swore Dutch oaths, what scurrying and hurrying and cackling there was, to be sure. Such persecuted hens! But it was a comfort that Providence watched over them, and they could hide up safe in the currant bushes, and be

back next day when Hans was gone away to his factory!

"Yes, yes, my dear," Mrs. Dorking would remark to Mrs. Chitty-gong, "our lives are mercifully spared; he came near hitting me with the spade he threw at me and Chit, and Flossy and Peep had a hard time of it in the pigweed—but it's all right now, and he is digging up beds nicely and smoothing them down, and to-morrow we can do it all over. I like to have him spade and work the earth over—it gives such a freshness, you know! We shouldn't mind his tantrums—oh, not a bit. He evidently is a foolish creature, subject to fits of rage, when one must keep out of his way. All we have to do is to keep good-natured and persevere."

Imagine the bottomless depths of Hans' indignation and despair.

He is in danger of losing not merely his flowers but his Christian graces. He is furious, and he swears in good heavy German. He goes and leans over the fence and remonstrates in broken English with his neighbours who own the hens, and gets laughed at for his pains.

He gets a gun and threatens to shoot them—but their name is legion. The black hens, and the white hens, and the grey hens, the Dorkings, and the Chitta-gongs, all abound in that vicinity, and every hen seems to have forty chickens, and they all prefer his ground because it is rich with worms, and he digs it over freshly so often. The hens, in fact, like Hans, and have no sort of idea that he and his garden exist for any other purpose than a good scratching ground. Poor Hans! Shooting does no good unless he give up his whole time to it and make a fortress of his house, and lie in wait at each window and door successively—and if he do that where are two dollars and a-half a day to come from?

Hence the catastrophe. "My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life!" Who will not drop a tear for him? We fancy, however, on the day of his funeral that the self-complacency of the murderous hens was no whit abated.

"My dear," says Mrs. Dorking, "see what a providence! That absurd wretch is gone; he will never trouble us more. Thus we see that all is for the best."

Poor Hans! We pity him the more that we have a neighbour who has taken to raising hens at our expense. Our grounds are their scratching ground. The young cockerels practice unearthly screechings under our window and start us from our slumbers at four o'clock in the morning. Did you ever hear juvenile Shanghai practising his first crow? It is a sound to dream of not to tell. These hens of my neighbours are everywhere—their name is legion. Is a path cleared and raked?—they scratch back the deap leaves into it. Are seeds planted?—they scratch them up. They burrow in every bed, and they are perfectly incapable of being either instructed or terrified. What shall be done with my neighbour's hens?

Must they be put down on the category of those things wherein Herbert says—

"God takes a text and preacheth patience?"

—*H. B. Stowe.*

MARRIAGE MAXIMS.

THE following "marriage maxims" are worthy of more than a hasty reading:—

The very nearest approach to domestic happiness on earth is in the cultivation on both sides of absolute unselfishness.

Never talk at one another, either alone or in company.

Never both speak at once.

Never speak loud to one another—unless the house is on fire.

Let each one strive to yield the oftenest to the wishes of the other.

Never find fault unless it is perfectly certain that a fault has been committed; and always speak lovingly.

Never taunt with a past mistake.

Neglect the whole world besides rather than one another.

Never make a remark at the expense of each other; it is a meanness.

Never part for a day without loving words to think of during absence.

Never meet without a loving welcome.

Never let the sun go down upon any anger or grievance.

Never let any fault you have committed go by until you have frankly confessed it and asked forgiveness.

Never forget the happy hours of early love.

Never sigh over what might have been, but make the best of what is.

Never forget that marriage is ordained of God, and that his blessing alone can make it what it should be.

Never let your hopes stop short of the eternal home.

THE STATE OF HINDOO WIDOWS.

By An Indian.

In my previous articles on Hindoo women I have pointed out how miserable is her life before and after her marriage. In the present I will show how much more miserable her life is in her widowhood. Woman's life is held in so very low estimation, that according to the Hindoo books of religion it has been considered advisable on her part to die on the same funeral pile in which her husband's body is buried. This tenet was strictly adhered to until a law was passed prohibiting such a barbarous custom. About fifty years ago we did consider her a chaste and faithful wife who would volunteer to burn herself to death with the dead body of her husband. The checked influence of such custom is not yet quite lost in the Hindoo mind. Even in opposition to law and the improvement of education a case of a wife's burning with her husband's dead body took place not quite two years ago. One can easily infer from this custom that, according to the belief of the Hindoos, woman's life is valuable as far as her husband's is concerned—it has not its own intrinsic value. What miseries, pains, and troubles can then be imagined which will not fall to her lot when she lives alone, even after the death of her husband? As soon as her husband dies the widow must set aside all her ornaments, her nice dress, her good food, and, as a penance, she must live on scanty and coarse food, wear coarse cloth, undergo all sorts of fastings, and must forbear taking part in any amusement during the remaining part of her life. I have often heard people say when a widow is ill, "What, shall a doctor be engaged at an enormous cost to treat a widow?" Her nearest relations, who greatly sympathise with her, would wish her death as a mark of love—for death will relieve her from the pangs of widowhood. It becomes a matter of great ridicule to many when they see a widow taking all care to keep her life in ease and comfort; they would then say in a disdainful tone that the widow wants a long life. Widows should never sleep on a good bed, should not express joy by laughter, and should not keep her body in good and beautiful order. Woman is transformed into disfigurement as soon as she becomes a widow—one would be sure to find a great change in her mind and body. If any one becomes a widow in her infancy she will be obliged to maintain all austerities of widowhood during the remainder of her life. She will be slighted by married ladies, and even her own dearest relations will look on her with abhorrence. Her whole life becomes one continued scene of miseries and troubles. A widow loses all her influence in society, she is regarded by all as a miserable wretch, who should not speak and do anything in society; if she is insulted by anybody she should patiently suffer—suffering becomes her portion. She is not allowed to take part in useful ceremonies, for she is considered as an unprosperous omen. Add to this the continual curses, abuse, and threatening of the relatives of her deceased husband, they would say that owing to her unlucky lot her husband had died—for there is a belief among the Hindoos that some wives, as well as husbands, have some unlucky mysterious propensities in their nature by which they soon eat up their consort. Hindoo society has made some progress towards civilisation, but yet it is not free from all such stigmas. Woman is not valued for her possessing a human soul, an image of God, and is not considered as a high being like man; her value lies only in her usefulness. A grown-up son, when he has a good wife, quite able to perform her household duties, would gladly wish the death of his mother; for it is her best opportunity to slip away from the world by seeing her son and his wife in this prosperous condition—as if the sole end of his mother is to nurture her son, and to no other purpose. It is considered a good wish towards his mother if he wishes her death at a time when her help is no longer required. O how painful it is to think of these! O for the day when Indians will learn to value human souls, when woman and man will be looked on on an equal footing as the offspring of God. Let no one read these facts as stories to beguile his or her vacant hours. I have introduced these facts, not to satisfy curiosity, but to excite sympathy towards the women in India. It is with great hope I desire that every one should try to raise the condition of Hindoo women; and the best means of doing so, I would suggest, is to assist the great philanthropic lady Miss Carpenter in her sacred mission, by sending her any help in

the shape of money, books, or pictures, that she may use the same for the ladies in India, for promoting whose welfare she has devoted all her life.

OBITUARY OF THE DEITY.

By Rev. W. G. Anderson.

The dogma that Jesus Christ is the self-existent, independent, infinite, and supreme God, whilst at the same time he is a created, finite man, is radically erroneous, unreasonable, and unscriptural. Multitudes have been drawn into infidelity by the promulgation of this error who might have been rejoicing to-day in the Christian hope, with minds purified, and thoughts elevated towards God, the sun and source of all perfection and goodness.

The celebrated English divine — Dr. Watts—embodies the orthodox idea, that Jesus Christ was the very God, in these words :

" Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in ;
When God the mighty Maker died,
For man, the creature's sin."

To this doctrine there are many weighty, overwhelming, and unanswerable objections :

1. If taken literally, these words signify that the supreme and infinite Jehovah did absolutely suffer, and bleed, and die. Admit this to be the fact, and it follows that the universe, with all its intricate laws, motives, and operations, was left without a Ruler or Governor, during the " three days and three nights " that Deity lay dead in his grave-clothes. This is no caricature. It is the doctrine, logically carried out.

2. To believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was at one and the same moment the Almighty Jehovah and yet a feeble man, finite and yet infinite, omniscient, and yet ignorant of many things, is a palpable contradiction. The supposition of a person of whom we could say, without the least limitation of terms, that he knew all things, which he did not know, thus : " But of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the ' Father ' "—is a monstrous absurdity.

3. That Jesus Christ being God, was absolutely independent, and yet that of his " own will he could do nothing," addresses itself to our conceptions as something opposed to the plain and current teachings of the Bible and common sense. He utterly disclaims any inherent qualifications in himself, or any underived authority and power. He says expressly, " I can of my own self do nothing." And his prayer, when expiring on the cross, refutes the idea that he was absolutely independent. " Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

4. That Jesus, being God, yet died and was buried, is opposed to reason and the Scripture: Jesus Christ himself asserts that " God is a spirit," and an apostle declares that " No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

5. That our Saviour Jesus Christ was not the very God is obvious from these declarations : " There is but one God, and and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." " And this is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

6. When the prophet Micah speaks of one " whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting," he is supposed to teach the supreme deity of Jesus Christ. That this language cannot be so interpreted is evident from the connection in which the passage is found, where he alludes to one whom he unqualifiedly calls " this man," that he says of him, that he " is to be a ruler in Israel," and that " he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God."

Surely it cannot be supposed that the inspired prophet would speak of a being whom he viewed as the eternal Jehovah, as a " man " who had " brethren," and who stood, not in his own underived strength, nor in the majesty of his own name, but in the strength of another.

Has the everlasting God a " Lord," whom he can call his " God," and in whose strength and name he can be said to stand ? Assuredly not. How then could it be said of this dependent man that his " goings forth have been from old, from everlasting?"

Every careful reader of the Bible must be aware that events foreordained in the everlasting counsels of God, and often spoken of as having actually taken place, long before their literal accomplishment. Thus in Rev. xiii. 8, Jesus is called " a

lamb slain before the foundation of the world." Not that he was slain before he was born, but that the event of his death was predetermined in the eternal counsels of Heaven. Thus Peter speaks of him, I. Peter i. 20, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times.

7. The passage of Scripture, Heb. ix 8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," is thought to prove the deity of Jesus Christ. This language means simply that in the duties of the high office with which he was invested Jesus Christ will exist for ever, the faithful servant of God, and the immutable friend of man. Other men, however pious and good, are inconstant. However zealous, wise, and benevolent, they frequently suffer their fervour to cool, their understanding to be betrayed into weakness and folly, and their benevolence to relax.

With Jesus Christ it was otherwise. As a dutiful son, as an abiding friend, as a constant adviser, and as the Saviour of our race, Jesus Christ is emphatically the same, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

8. The language of the prophet Isaiah (ix. 6), "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," is frequently adduced in support of the doctrine that Jesus Christ is God. To this we reply, that it is an obvious contradiction to say that this "child" is the uncreated, Almighty Jehovah, or that this "son" is the everlasting Father, the creator of the universe. Nothing can possibly be more absurd, but the prophet does not assert this. He does not affirm that this "child" and "son" was the "Mighty God" and Everlasting Father," but merely that his name should be so called.

It is well known that the Jews were in the habit of giving to their offspring, as an estimation of the parents' circumstances, or of their feelings, wishes, or expectations in regard to them, the most high-sounding titles, and very often the holiest epithets. For instance, the distinguished individual who was called "Joshua" was really called "Jehovah the Saviour," for this is the English of the name "Joshua." So the prophet who bore the name "Elijah" was called "God the Lord," for this is the English of "Elijah." The person who bore the name of "Lemuel" was called "God with them," for this is the translation of the Hebrew name "Lemuel." In like manner Jesus was actually called "God with us," for this is the meaning of "Immanuel." And a most appropriate name it was, since through him the presence of God was made peculiarly manifest to men. That Jesus Christ had the most heavenly and mysteriously invested mind that was ever clothed in material habiliments, we sincerely believe. But to say of a person whose life was full of vicissitudes—a wailing infant—who "grew in favour both with God and man," felt the pangs of hunger and thirst, and sorrowed and wept, and was tempted of an evil spirit, prayed to his Father, and bled and died—that he is the infinite God—is to assert what neither reason nor Scripture can justify.

From the foregoing objections to the Deity of Jesus Christ, to which many more might be added, it will be seen that that orthodox dogma finds no support from the Scriptures. Hence, we hopefully conclude that the time is not far distant when this doctrine will be consigned to the dust-bin of utter oblivion. Though long superstitiously regarded as the corner-stone of Christianity, it even now trembles. Heb. viii. 13: "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

A TRUE MAN.

Such was our friend. Formed on the good old plan—
A true, a brave, and downright honest man!
He blew no trumpet in the market-place,
Nor in the church, with hypocritic face,
Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace.
Loathing pretence, he did with cheerful will
What others talked of while their hands were still.

And while "Lord, Lord!" the pious tyrants cried,
Who, in the poor, their Master crucified,
His daily prayer, far better understood
In acts than words, was simply doing good.
So calm, so constant was his rectitude,
That by his loss alone we know his worth,
And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth! —*Whittier.*

Luther and Erasmus.—It was said that "Erasmus laid the egg of the Reformation, and Luther hatched it." Erasmus afterwards, having quarrelled with the new party, said: "I laid a hen's egg, but Luther has hatched a crow's egg." Hallam remarks that whatever the bird may have been, it pecked bravely at the Church."

VISIONS.

By J. M. Dixon.

On the hills of memory we look upon the world's past through the historic eye-glass. What wonders we behold in that backward view! Among other objects of deep and moving interest we see the God of the nations conducting his people from the house of bondage to the promised land of freedom and culture. Every Israel has a Moses in the wilderness, who harkens to the voice of the Lord God and leads his people Canaanward. When one leader falls, or can take the people no further, another continues the march, and the new Moses sees a better land of rest than his predecessor. Thus the seers keep the world on its timeless journey towards the Sabbath of holy dream, where

"In the sin consuming sight of God"

there is nothing unclean. Light falls upon the seer's mind, and he unstumblingly leads a stumbling world towards the land of promise. This believer is God's constant miracle, the pillar of cloud by day and the fire-light by night. He gives food and drink to the people in the wilderness. By his prayer manna falls abundantly; by his touch the rock of unbelief becomes a well of living water. The sea of passion is calm at his prevailing voice, or he divides the waters and conducts his people to the other side of the sea as on dry land. To him God speaks in vision; in his vision he sees the future as present, and in that sight he is strong. Before he began his public work he retired to the wilderness or the mountain. There he lived in dreams. Of that preparation time he says :—

"I lived with visions for my company
Instead of men and women, years ago,
And found them gentle masters, nor thought to know
A sweeter music than they played to me."

When he goes forth to teach he preaches the glad tidings of great joy revealed to him. He points men to the best vision of his soul as their Canaan, saying the kingdom of heaven "must be within." This world of holy beauty within, and the vision of more to come, make the best answer to the vague and ceaseless longing of the soul for perfect life.

The master spirits of our race take of the higher things of God and reveal them to us. Their great thoughts are heaven lights, and forms of wondrous grace and loveliness. The logician's best reason is a measure of the eternal Logos, lighting time. The poet's fancy is so much of heaven brought into time. This man is sent from God to make us feel that this world is also Emmanuel's land. As his light enlarges our view of the cosmos, and the lovely creations of his fancy move before us, we feel that this world is the shady outercourts of heaven. This man opens the windows of heaven and gives us foregleams of immortality. Touched by his divine power, all things in nature become shadows and symbols of eternal realities. At his divine voice missionaries of truth, love, and peace, go forth everywhere. In the vision there is no death nor ugliness. What we call death is change of life; and what is regarded as ugliness is only so when isolated. Seen in its connection with the vast whole, it is part of the wondrous beauty. In the vision nothing is unclean—to the "pure all things are pure." Neither is anything in nature unmusical; all is divinely vocal. What a sacred concert is nature to him that "hath ears to hear!" We spoil our spiritual hearing, and waste our time in listening to men and women murdering time and tune, while all the time the world is filled with heavenly music. What inspiring music in the morning peace! What a voice of God among the trees in the cool of the evening! What voices of silence always and everywhere! In perfect strains the ancient anthem is being ever sung—"Glory to God—good will to men." In the rhythm of the poet we hear the music of the world of harmony, and have sweet and assuring whispers of the "fulness of joy." This holy dreamer shows us that the truest life of man is a dream—the vision of an unrealised self. He strengthens faith, makes it a kind of sight, destroys unbelief, and restores faith, by sending the lovely rays of the eternal summer-world into this winter land. Through the translucent walls of many a human body he gives us peeps into heaven. He banishes the bitter spirit of theology by the revelation of lovely souls, with creeds different from our own, and gives charity a place far, far above dogma—

"Others that after toil and storm
May'st seem to have reached a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

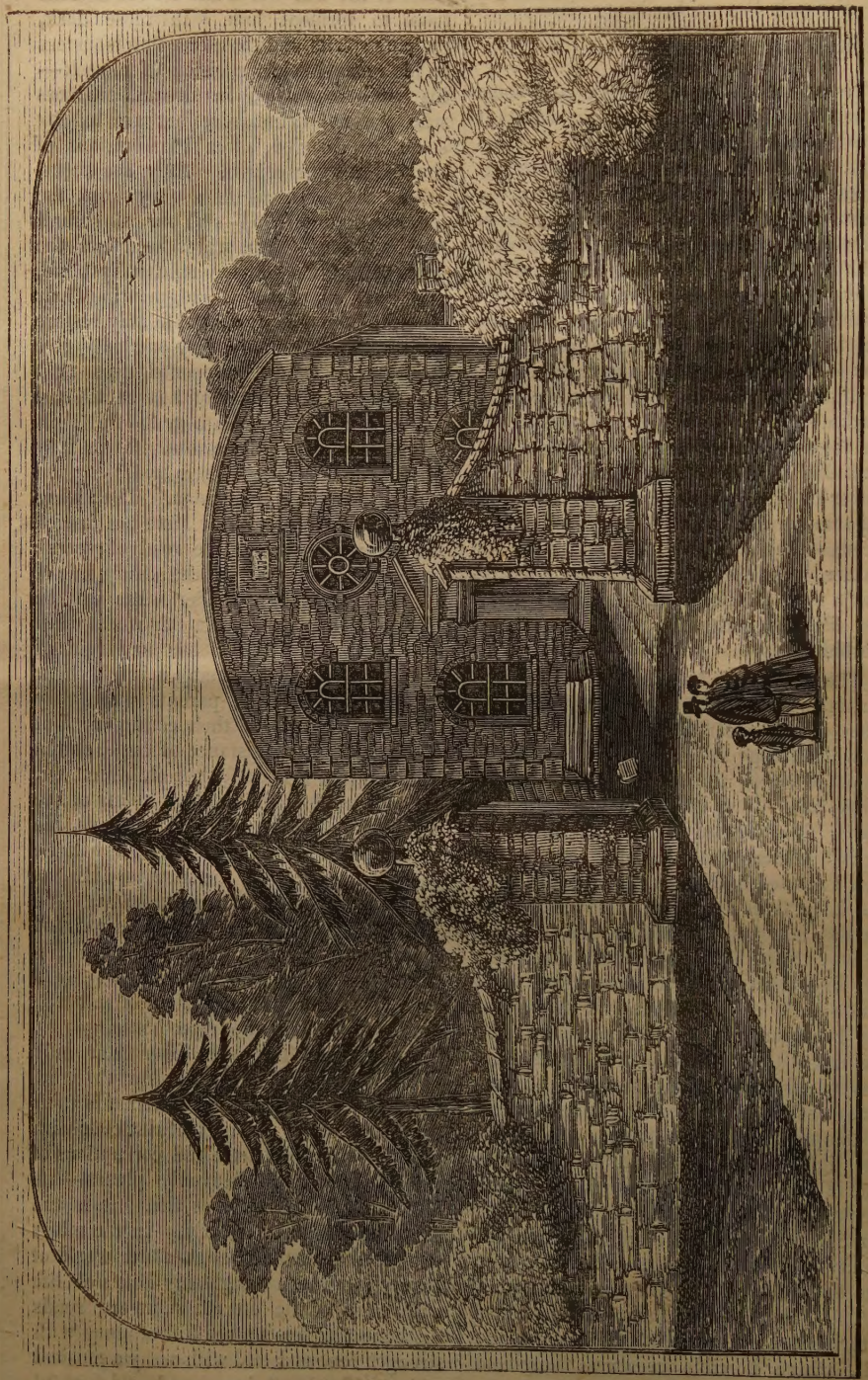
The vision of fear:—There are some persons who go through life in constant dread of some approaching evil or calamity. They even rejoice with trembling. When happiness is in their hearts it is maimed by the suspicion that grief is at their door. Fear peoples their path with unhappy spirits. They are almost afraid to do right lest they should do wrong; afraid to do the duties of this life lest they should miss the joys hereafter. They look not into the world to come as a home of light, peace, and joy: they see it as blackness and woe chiefly. They see not the love of God in the future world, carefully and tenderly gathering every flower of human excellence into His eternal summer-house, and destroying the vice-weeds—they fear the king, and miss the Father. This vision of fear perverts man's view of life, weakens his character, and fills his path with the demons of a morbid fancy.

The vision of happiness:—There are persons who live with this sweet day-dream. They take a cheerful, sunny view of life. However happy they may be, they hope to be more so in the future. Does practicality wash away the cloud-foundation on which they erected their "castle in the air?" Before the etherial structure has well vanished another and better joy-house has been built by them. However dark the day may be, they see the sun breaking its way through the clouds, and stretching its long, light arms towards them, with hands full of blessings. The frowning Providence is the passing shadows on the face of the Goddess of Joy. These are they who see light in darkness. To such sunny souls even immortal night would be simply the shadow of Him who is infinite light. The danger in such cases is that of hoping to reach the vision without the prayer of work. We must toil up the long winding staircase of duty, to reach the beauty of holiness, and get a lovelier peep into our Father's house of many mansions.

There is the vision of sin. The drunkard is tormented by the sight of his self-made hell, where horrible creatures surround him and threaten to torture him to death. By his own hand he has opened the black gates of the woe-world and let the demons loose to torment him. In those dark, dancing spirits, and those creeping monsters in his room, he has a vision of himself—his vices incarnated in dream. Others who are not drunkards, but are led by some low passion, often have visions of the end of their course. They see themselves as moral wrecks; they read the handwriting of God—"Your sins shall find you out." But they heed not the warning. They become spiritually blind, and have no vision of judgment. Their stumble into the unseen life may restore their vision, the shock may suddenly give them sight. With re-opened eyes they may rest in the porch of heaven till the sin-weakened vision can bear the full light of the sun of righteousness. Then they may "enter the joy of their soul."

The heart has its vision. The loving heart has sweet dreams. Time has carried the parents far along the road of years; they are a good way on the shady side of life, and they often wonder what will be the lot of their children in this world when they are gone. The clouds and rain of sadness have spoiled many a bright hour in the lives of those parents when they have thus thought of their children. But desire takes the assistance of hope, and a bright future is seen for the children. Or, if doubt troubles the anxious hearts of the parents, piety says, "The Lord lives, He never dies, He cares for all; all will be well." The cold and the storm are His, as well as the sunshine and the calm. We will lie down and sleep at the appointed time, knowing that God will keep His children. As our evening sun sets we will keep the dear, sweet vision of all the family at home in the upper house.

Blessed are they who keep their holy vision clear, unclouded by low thoughts and impure feelings. That vision is their saviour, the holy spirit of Christ ever with them, to win them from the corruptions of the world to the heavenly places—the higher plains of religious life. It is the air of heaven to their souls. In the midst of repulsiveness it gives an inner world of beauty; lightens the gloomy hours of life with rays of the eternal summer; sends the honest toilers up the hill of duty with strength renewed, and with many a musical whisper of "Well done, good and faithful servants."



GULLIFORD CHAPEL, NEAR TOPSHAM, DEVON.

GULLIFORD CHAPEL, NEAR TOPSHAM, DEVON.

The Gulliford Chapel, standing on a hill, with extensive views of land, sea, and river scenery, is admired for the rural beauty of its surroundings, and loved for its honoured associations, covering a period of more than two hundred years.

The congregation had its origin in the conscientious labours of one of the noble "two thousand," the Rev. Samuel Fones, who was Vicar of Woodbury, till ejected by the notorious "Bartholomew Act" of 1662. The first and original meeting-house was erected to fulfil the necessities of those troublous times in the midst of a wood, with a narrow footpath leading to it. Here the Nonconformist citizens of Exeter and the Dissenters of Exmouth resorted in secret to worship according to the dictates of their consciences. Mr. Fones left the country soon after his ejectment. In 1687 his people were sufficiently numerous to invite as their pastor the Rev. Samuel Tapper, another sufferer for conscience' sake. Liberty for conscientious worship having been granted to Dissenters, the wood was cleared away, and an open field presented itself, a portion of which was bought for "erecting thereon a meeting-house for religious worship and the service of God of the people commonly called Presbyterians." Such is the language of the original deed, dated April 10, 1689.

Mr. Tapper's warm, practical preaching and exemplary conduct gained him universal love among his people and wide respect in the district. But his good qualities did not secure him from the fury of High Church bigots, who, during the times of persecution, violently entered his meeting-house and broke the windows. On the next Lord's-day he prayed earnestly for his enemies, that God would forgive their sin and turn their hearts.

His labours were blessed with success, and his congregation increased and prospered. In 1708 Mr. Tapper, feeling the infirmities of age, resigned his charge to the Rev. Joseph Mariston, who had been his assistant. About this time the congregation numbered 500 persons. The ministers who succeeded were the Revs. Thomas Hancock, John Turner, Thomas Jervis (who afterwards became tutor to the first Marquis of Lansdowne), and John Jervis, during whose faithful and eminently successful ministry (lasting from 1773 to 1820) the old building was taken down and the present one erected.

In the summer previous to his death Mr. Jervis had been much engaged in superintending the erection of a new chapel in the village of Lympstone, a more central situation than Gulliford, and it was intended that this building should be used exclusively in winter, as being most accessible, and that both should be open in summer. He did not live to preach in it; a fortnight before the day of opening he was summoned to join in the services of a nobler temple—a temple "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." His friend, the Rev. Mr. Yeates, who ever felt a lively interest in the congregation, preached at the opening, and conducted the services afterwards for some time. In 1821 the Rev. Mr. Seaward, from Poole, became the pastor of the Gulliford and Lympstone congregations. His ministry, unhappily, inaugurated a rapid decline in numbers and influence of his congregation. Every minister cannot command popularity; even if his talents be considerable, his usefulness may be impaired by sectarian prejudices and unavoidable personal defects; but every minister can let *his conduct become his Christian profession.* By a contrary course, the interests of pure religion are often injured far more than by the influence of ignorance or the assaults of bigotry.

Other Nonconformist chapels were built in the nighbourhood, belonging for the most part to the "Independents," and these absorbed many who had previously connected themselves with the Gulliford worshippers. Hence the place never recovered the influential *status* of its earlier history.

After the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Adams, who succeeded in 1835, Dr. Perry, of Exeter, supplied the Gulliford pulpit. The Rev. Edmund Squire ministered till 1848, and was followed by the Rev. Goodwyn Barmby, who undertook the charge of the united congregations of Topsham and Gulliford. The Revs. L. Jones, B.A., H. W. Ellis, and James Cooper followed in succession, Mr. Cooper leaving in 1868.

The chapel has frequently been almost deserted, and had it not been for one or two faithful members who have remained staunch to their liberal principles through

all vicissitudes, the chapel might have been closed. The "Lees," of Ebford Barton, were zealous and honourable supporters of this place for generations, and a lady of the same family continues to give it her presence and aid. The present minister is the Rev. William Birks, who has considerably increased the numbers and revived the prospects of the congregation.

Some of the members come long distances, and show their interest by a regular attendance on the services and a liberal support of the ministry of this interesting and picturesque though isolated sanctuary.

The following very appropriate lines have been sent us, written by a friend on visiting this chapel:—

"The short-lived spring was bursting into summer,
And all creation teemed with new delight.
It was the hallowed Sabbath! Forth we went,
My friend and I, with solemn musings led,
To where in nature's loveliest haunts, mid sights
And sounds impregnate with the Almighty's praise,
There stood a simple chapel, where of yore
Throng'd the surrounding neighbourhood to breathe
Their undivided praise to Him, the one
Great Lord of all! But now well-nigh deserted,
A few, a very few, remaining still
By Orthodoxy's potion undebauch'd,
Met to uplift their hearts to the One God.
Much did I marvel at His hidden ways,
Permitting thus, to purblind sight so strange,
His worship into decadence to fall.
But when I thought of his mysterious will—
A God of Love—yet letting battle rage,
Scattering the seeds of pestilence around,
Loosing the whirlwind with remorseless wrath,
Yielding to death and desolation, oft
The trident of the sea, and giving up
Whole cities to the gorging earthquake, and
To her twin-brother the volcano fiend—
Yea, when I thought how all subserved His purpose,
From thence distilling Mercy's holiest dews,
And from the womb of contrarieties
Thus bringing forth His Mystery of Love—
My heart bow'd down with adoration deep,
Nor dar'd to question aught of Infinite!
Even as winter's sterile reign gives way,
And to some purpose aids the summer queen
In her luxuriant sway, so doubtless thus,
In God's own time, His might will blazon forth.
Fit temple for the Almighty's praise! or lay—
Religion's shrine in nature's temple rear'd!
Well judged he who raised thee here, aloof
From din of town in sacred solitude,
Where the lorn heart by contemplation led,
Impress'd by nature's sweet solemnities,
May yield itself meet sacrifice to heaven.
Sweet spot! with song of birds and breath of flowers
Redolent; and solemn whispering of trees,
That, with their leafy tongues murmur strange language—
To Him who doth interpret it aright,
The heart's own language—O how little known!
Sweet spot! with thine associations sweet:
(How soothingly they now steal o'er my soul!)
Never from memory's tablet wilt thou be
Erased; but bloom perpetually there,
A paradise of bliss, in which my heart
Shall oft seek refuge from its many woes."

"THEY SAY."

No words can condemn too strongly the grosser and more malignant forms of backbiting and scandal. The ancient laws, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people," are for all time. The divine opinion of such conduct is concisely and judicially given—for example, "He who uttereth slander is a very fool;" "He who goeth about as a slanderer revealeth secrets; but he who is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter;" "The words of a tale-bearer are like sportive ones, yet they go down into the innermost parts of the body."

There is, however, a somewhat milder form of this evil, of which too many are more or less guilty. It appears in the use of the insignificant, sneaking, half-apologetic phrase, "They say—," the sentence being generally completed with something damaging to the character of the person spoken of. Several friends meet at an evening party, or in the street, when the name of some one not present is mentioned, and forthwith one of the company speaks quietly, gently, and with professed sympathy, or regret, or mild censure, or solemn disapprobation in the tones of his voice, to the following effect: "*They say* he has a great many bills in the market, and will find it difficult to meet them." Or, "*They say* that his bankruptcy was a good thing for him." Or, "*They say* that he is a perfect bear at home." Or, "*They say* he did'nt marry the woman he wanted." Or, "*They say* she is very fond of dress, and gets things unknown to her husband." Or, "*They say* no servant stays with her longer than a month; they can't bear her." Or, "*They say* she is not what she pretends to be."

These are fair average specimens of "sayings" that may not perhaps be called

slanderous, but which are decidedly mischievous. It is not necessary to look far for the reason of their use. Men believe evil of others more readily or more easily than they believe good. A late writer exposes this sad failing of human nature in the following incisive terms: "How comes it that the evil men say spreads so widely and lasts so long, while our good, kind words don't seem, somehow, to take root and bear blossom? Is it that in the stony hearts of mankind these pretty flowers can't find a place to grow? Certain it is that scandal is a good, brisk talk, whereas praise of one's neighbour is by no means lively hearing. An acquaintance grilled, scored, devilled and served with mustard and cayenne pepper, excites the appetite; whereas a slice of cold friend, with currant jelly, is but a sickly, unrelishing meat."

The expression "They say—" is most generally used in retailing small bits of scandal. The speaker, in effect, says "Now, *I* am not reponsible for this, *I* do not vouch for its truth; but you were speaking just now of Smith. Well, they say—" and out comes something not altogether to Smith's credit. Observe, the speaker does not wish to give you the unclean thing as from himself; he carries, as it were, a pair of moral tongs, with which he handles the matter, and when he has put down the tongs he says, "*I* am not dirty."

A BRAVE GIRL.

There are not so many brave girls about in these days as we would like to see, let the girls say what they please to the contrary. We have been watching to see how they manœuvre, and this is the conclusion to which we have to come. Many of them are real cowards—they are afraid to keep on the right side of truth. They may not be afraid of the dark, nor of dogs and spiders, but they are afraid to do what they think is right.

There was Hattie Stone, a bright-eyed intelligent, sprightly, lovable creature, sitting by her mother, who was trimming her winter bonnet with gay ribbons and beautiful feathers, when Nellie Larkin, one of her playmates, called.

"Is that your bonnet?" inquired Nellie.

"Yes," replied Hattie. "Isn't it pretty?"

"It is very pretty indeed, I think," answered Nellie. "Mine is a poor looking thing beside that."

"Are you not going to have a new one?"

"No; mother says my old one must answer this winter, with a little repairing, and I think it will myself."

"You will be the only girl in the meeting-house with an old bonnet on," continued Hattie, "and that will make you feel badly."

"No, it will not make me feel badly at all," said Nellie. "I like your new bonnet very much, and at the same time I am contented with my old one."

"Well, I should be afraid that people would laugh at me when everybody else had new bonnets," responded Hattie. "I want to look as well as the rest.

"Mother says it is cowardly to be afraid of what people will say about us, if we are doing what we think is right."

"Then there are a great many cowards in the world," said Hattie, "and I suppose I am one. But you mean to be brave and wear your old bonnet," said Hattie smiling as she said it, for she evidently meant to ridicule Nellie's idea of bravery.

"I don't think it is necessary to be very brave to wear a last year's bonnet," replied Nellie. "Mother says she can't afford a better one, and that is enough for me to know to be satisfied with what I have."

Now Nellie did not know that she was a brave girl in deciding to wear the bonnet that she had worn for a year. But she was the bravest girl in the neighbourhood. Hattie—poor little mincing coward—was afraid somebody would laugh at her, if she did not have a bonnet as gay as a peacock's tail, and be in the height of fashion. She had not courage to say, "Let others think as they please, I shall do what mother thinks best." Poor weak thing! Suppose everybody else should take it into their heads to go without bonnets, she of course would not dare to do otherwise, so she would go bareheaded. How much nobler is Nellie, who dares to follow her mother's counsels, though she may not appear quite so fashionable! Yes, she is the genuine brave girl—unlike thousands who always stop and ask, what will be thought of this and that? What will Mrs. A. or Jemima B. say about me if I do thus and so? not having courage to do right, even, lest some one laugh or sneer.

HOW A MOTHER FEELS.

IN VIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS WOE.

THE *Liberal Christian* extracts the following mother's outcry to God for her wandering, ne'er-do-well son, from "Robert Falconer," George Macdonald's powerful novel:

"Och hone! och hone! I've a sair, sair hert, I've a sair hert i' my breast, O Lord! thoo knowest. My ain Andrew! To think o' the bairnie that I carriet, and leuch i' my face—to think o' 'em being a reprobate! O Lord cudna he be eleckit yet? Is there nae turnin' o' thy decrees? Na, na, that wadna do at a'. But while there's life there's houp. But wha cares whether he be alive or no? Naebody can tell. Glaidly wad I luik upon s' deid face gin I cud believe that his sowl wasna among the lost. But eh, the torments o' that place! and the reik that gangs up forever an' ever, smothering the stars! And my Andrew doon i' the hert o' 't cryin'! And me no able to win till him. O Lord! I canna say Thy will be done. But dinna la't to my chairge; for gin ye was a mither yersel' ye wadna pit him there. O Lord! I'm verra ill-fashioned. I beg yer pardon. I'm near oot o' my min'. Forgi'e me, O Lord! for I hardly ken what I'm saying. He was my ain babe, my ain Andrew, and ye gae him to me yersel'. And noo he's for the finger o' scorn to pint at; an ootcast an' a wan'erer frae his ain country, an' daurna come within sicht o' 't for them 'at wad tak' the law o' 'im. An' it's a' drink—drink an' ill company! He wad a dune weel eneuch gin they wad only hae latten him be. What for maum men be aye drink-drinkin' at something or ither? I never want it. Eh, gin I war as young as when he was born, I wad be up an' awa' this very nicht to luik for him. But it's no use me trin' 't. O God! ance more I pray Thee to turn him frae the error o' 's ways afore he goes hence an'is na more. And oh, dinna lat Robert gang after him, as he's like eneuch to do. Gie me grace to haud him ticht, that he may be to the praise o' Thy glory forever an' ever. Amen."

Then afterward, when her deep, loving heart is rent to its core by the news that this son is dead, we have this glimpse into the inward life so passionate and turbulent beneath the outward calm and repression:

Her New Testament, a large-print octavo, lay on the table beside her unopened; for where within those boards could she find comfort for a grief like hers? That it was the will of God might well comfort any suffering of her own; but would it comfort Andrew? And if there was no comfort for Andrew, how was Andrew's mother to be comforted?

Yet God had given his first-born to save His brethren; how could he be pleased that she should dry her tears and be comforted? True, some awful unknown force of a necessity with which God could not cope came in to explain it; but this did not make God more kind, for He knew it all every time He made a man; nor man less sorrowful, for God would have his very mother forget him, or, worse still, remember Him and be happy.

"Read a chapter to me, laddie," she said.

Robert opened and read, till he came to the words, "I pray not for the world."

"He was o' the world," said the old woman; "and if Christ wadna pray for him, what for suld I?"

Already, so soon after her son's death, would her theology begin to harden her heart. The strife which results from believing that the higher love demands the suppression of the lower, is the most fearful of all discords, the absolute love-slaying love—the house divided against itself; one moment all given up for the will of Him, the next the human tenderness rushing back in a flood. Mrs. Falconer burst into a very agony of weeping. From that day, for many years, the name of her lost Andrew never passed her lips in the hearing of her grandson, and certainly in that of no one else.

But in a few weeks she was more cheerful. It is one of the mysteries of humanity that mothers in her circumstances, and holding her creed, do regain not merely the faculty of going on with the business of life, but, in most cases, even cheerfulness. The infinite truth, the love of the universe, supports them beyond their consciousness, coming to them like sleep from the roots of their being, and having nothing to do with their opinions or beliefs. And hence spring these comforting subterfuges of hope to which they all fly. Not being able to trust the Father entirely, they yet say, "Who can tell what took place at the last moment? Who can tell whether God

did not please to grant them saving faith at the eleventh hour?"—that so they might pass from the very gates of hell, the only place for which their life had fitted them, into the bosom of love and purity! This God could do for all; this for the son beloved of his mother perhaps he might do?

O rebellious mother heart! dearer to God than that which beats laboriously solemn under Genevan gown or Lutheran surplice! if thou wouldst read by thine own large light, instead of the glimmer from the phosphorescent brains of theologians thou mightest even be able to understand such a simple word as that of the Saviour, when, wishing his disciples to know that he had a nearer regard for them as his brethren in holier danger, than those who had not yet partaken of his light, and, therefore, praying for them not merely as human beings, but as the human beings they were, he said to his Father in their hearing, "I pray not for the world, but for them"—not for the world now, but for them—a meaningless utterance, if he never prayed for the world; a word of small meaning, if it was not his very wont and custom to pray for the world—for men as men. Lord Christ! not alone from the pains of hell, or of conscience—not alone from the outer darkness of self and all that is mean and poor and low, do we fly to thee; but from the anger that arises within us at the wretched words spoken in thy name, at the degradation of thee and of thy Father in the mouths of those that claim especially to have found thee, do we seek thy feet. Pray thou for them also, for they know not what they do.

MORNING PRAYER.

The morning bright,
With rosy light,
Has waked me from my sleep;
Father, I own
Thy love alone,
Thy little one doth keep.

All through the day
I humbly pray,
Be Thou my guard and guide;
My sins forgive,
And let me live,
Blest Father, near Thy side.

Oh! make thy rest
Within my breast,
Great spirit of all grace;
Make me like thee,
Then shall I be
Prepared to see Thy face.

MORAL DIVERSITIES.—ARE THEY OF NATURE OR TRAINING?

An important and interesting question; but one, I could imagine, that we should hear far less of than we do but for certain grave religious speculations which would appear to be inseparably associated with it. It might be interesting as a simple intellectual inquiry; it might be of importance to have it resolved in reference to practical action; yet I think what gives special interest to it is a sort of feeling that we have that, looked at in one way, it would land us upon a sad and distasteful theological conclusion. This theological conclusion is evolved in this way. Plainly, were all natures alike good, the same training ought to produce the same good results, and it does not—*does not*, as plain matter of fact; but if not, then there must be, in some, elements of badness in the original constitution; so not our human training, but the great Creator and Maker of human souls is brought into question. *His* goodness, who is said to have made all things good, comes under doubt—*His* goodness, which it is the nearest and most cherished feeling of our hearts to believe is *perfect goodness*, and could make *nothing* evil. And shall we say the good God is in fault? Is there no solution but that sad one? I say it is this theological element—this terrible doubt about God—that lends a prime and abiding interest to the question.

But even if we say that the portentous growth of badness we observe in some natures is wholly of training, I do not see that *that* wholly clears away the cloud from the fair vision of God. These things which alarm us so from their frightful development in some men—cruelty, avarice, callousness amounting to almost a total want of natural affection and feeling, moral insensibility, and the like—these things are assuredly not branches of a tree without a root. Nothing in nature has a purely underived and separate existence, and neither have these things. There must have been germs of these things in the original nature, or there could have been no after-growth and over-growth. I surely am right in this—there must have been an original susceptibility in the nature—a something within to be quickened and developed—or they could not possibly have an existence. So it becomes not a question of kind, but of degree, and we

are still thrown back upon the original nature for their source. I say, when you talk of these bad things being wholly of training, you only evade the difficulty—throw it a little further back, but you do not remove it. Whether you say this badness is of nature or training, you still impeach the divine Creator, *if* it does impeach Him.

Of course there is a summary way of getting out of the difficulty that we are all acquainted with. You might say the badness *is* in the nature, but God had nothing to do with it, for He made man good, and it was the devil that made him bad. But this idea I put aside. And there is yet another way. You might resolve the more signal and conspicuous instances of moral deformity by saying there is deterioration there, arising from the evil courses of successive foregoing generations, which *would* at last stamp the nature in that terrible way. And there would be truth in this statement; and it really would, in some measure, roll off the cloud from the face of the divine Creator, for men's vices and faults do work themselves out in that way. But neither is this theory sufficient to meet all the facts of the case, and if God's perfect goodness is to be vindicated, we must look for another theory.

I have said, there is no shutting our eyes to the fact, that on *any* theory there is getting wholly away from nature as having something to do with this badness, for the germ of whatever appears in the character must certainly be looked for in the nature; I may but extend the idea when I say that not only do I believe the germ to be there, but frequently the quality in more or less developed form. Men, I say, are not born alike good. With the seeds of goodness and badness in all men, there is yet an unequal distribution of these seeds in men. There are proclivities to evil in some men which do not appear in others. There are positively bad natures, and there are positively good natures. Men's moral constitution seems to me as various as their mental. But this very fact which I so confidently assume, because I believe it to be wholly undeniable, and which, if it be *fact*, I *dare* not deny—this is the very fact that is so staggering to some people, and makes them fear when they admit it, that they are, as it were, reproaching God.

Yet how are they reproaching God? For, as I think, these bad things in the original nature, in however developed a form, are as *germ and seed*, are, in their essence, not really bad things at all. They have *become* bad things, and terribly bad things, because they have been suffered to grow out of all proportion to the rest of the nature. Take cruelty for instance, that worst and most hateful quality of the human character—and is it not possible to think that that in its incipient condition, in its essence, is no bad thing at all? It is a sort of hardness, so to speak, of moral texture, rendering you unmoved at the sight of pain; but is not that quality, that necessary quality of the human character akin to it, which renders a parent firm and resentless in punishing his child when the case demands? Take avarice again, and what is that but the desire to acquire in frightful excess? And so I believe it might be said of every hateful thing in character; it is not bad in its essence, in its incipient condition; and it is only bad when, from want of moral guidance and control, it has missed its true end, or passed beyond its due limits. And if, in any case, one of these tendencies appears strongly marked in the original nature so as apparently to have already attained to fullest growth—it is not, as I have said, that its essence is changed, but the watchful and anxious parent's eye will at once detect its existence, and he will make it his duty, by every wise appliance of love, of instruction, and discipline, to seek to restrain it within due limits, and find for it its proper use; while for the man himself who is born to this perilous heritage, the overgrown tendency will remain and constitute his weak part—the crevice in his armour—his besetting sin to be looked after, struggled with, prayed against; his besetting sin to keep ever above his moral sensibilities and hold him on the heights of moral watchfulness; his besetting sin, to make him humble, moreover, and to teach him, out of his own struggles and failures and disappointments the duty of a patient bearing with and generous allowance for the weaknesses and defects of his fellow men. This is the moral service to which we can yoke our present reflection. Worse things might happen to a man than to be born with an unbalanced moral nature. J. S.

"THE GOD OF OUR FATHERS."

Mr. Max Muller, in his third lecture on the "Science of Religion," observes:—

"I wish to call back to your recollection the fact that in exploring together the ancient archives of language we found that the highest god had received the same name in the ancient mythology of India, Greece, Italy, and Germany, and had retained that name whether worshipped on the Himalayan mountains or among the oaks of Dodona, on the Capitol or in the forests of Germany. I pointed out that his name was Dyaus in Sanskrit, Zeus in Greek, Jovis in Latin, Tiu in German; but I hardly dwelt with sufficient strength on the startling nature of this discovery. These names are not mere names, they are historical facts, aye, facts more immediate, more trustworthy, than many facts of mediæval history. These words are not mere words, but they bring before us, with all the vividness of an event which we witnessed ourselves but yesterday, the ancestors of the whole Aryan race, thousands of years it may be before Homer and the Veda, worshipping an unseen Being under the selfsame name, the best, the most exalted name they could find in their vocabulary—under the name of Light and Sky. And let us not turn away and say that this was after all but nature worship and idolatry. No, it was not meant for that, though it may have been degraded into that in later times; *Dyaus* did not mean the blue sky, nor was it simply the sky personified; it was meant for something else. We have in the Veda the invocation *Dyaus pi'ar*, the Greek *Zeu pater*, the Latin *Jupiter;* and that means in all the three languages what it meant before these three languages were torn asunder—it means Heaven-Father! These two words are not mere words; they are to my mind the oldest poem, the oldest prayer of mankind—or at least of that pure branch of it to which we belong—and I am as firmly convinced that this prayer was uttered, that this name was given to the unknown God before Sanskrit was Sanskrit and Greek was Greek, as when I see the Lord's Prayer in the languages of Polynesia and Melanesia I feel certain that it was first uttered in the language of Jerusalem. We little thought when we heard for the first time the name of Jupiter, degraded it may be by Homer or Ovid into a scolding husband or a faithless lover, what sacred records lay enshrined in this unholy name. We shall have to learn the same lesson again and again in the Science of Religion, viz., that the place whereon we stand is holy ground. Thousands of years have passed since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the north and the south, the west and the east; they have each formed their languages, they have each founded their empires and philosophies, they have each built temples and razed them to the ground; they have all grown older, and it may be wiser and better; but when they seach for a name for what is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did when gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far and as near as near can be; they can but combine the selfsame words, and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure for ever, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'"

UNCERTAINTY.

O Father, hear!
The way is dark, and I would fain discern
What steps to take, into which path to turn;
Oh make it clear.

My faith is weak;
I long to hear thee say: "This is the way;
Walk in it, fainting soul; I'll be thy stay,"
Speak Lord, oh speak!

Let thy strong arm
Reach through the gloom for me to lean upon,
And with a willing heart I'll journey on,
And fear no harm.

I wait for thee
As those who, watching, wait the coming dawn;
Pant, as for water pants the thirsty fawn;
Oh come to me.

It is thy child,
Who sits in dim uncertainty and doubt,
Waiting and longing till the light shine out
Upon the wild.

My Father! see,
I trust the faithfulness displayed of old,
I trust the love that never can grow cold—
I trust in thee.

And thou wilt guide,
For thou hast promised never to forsake
The soul that thee its confidence doth make;
I've none beside.

Thou knowest me,
Thou knowest how I now in darkness grope;
And, oh, thou knowest that my only hope
Is found in thee.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

—o—

LONG SERMONS.—"Deacon," said a minister after a sermon, "I am very tired." "Indeed," replied the deacon, "then you know how to pity us."

MIRACLES.—Dean Milman says, "Men believe in miracles because they are religious; I doubt their becoming religious through the belief in miracles."

A CHILD'S INTEREST.—A little boy who was praised for never taking his eyes off the preacher answered with all simplicity: "I wanted to see how near he was to the end."

SWALLOWING A SUNBEAM.—A little fellow was eating some bread and milk, when he turned around to his mother, and said: "Oh, mother, I am full of glory. There was a sunbeam on my spoon, and I swallowed it."

GRAPHIC COMMENTS.—"Father Mills" frequently diversified his public Scripture readings with original remarks. On one occasion, when reading the account of Satan's temptation of our Lord, he interjected this remark after the offer of the kingdoms of the earth: "Lying rascal, he didn't own a single acre."

A CURE FOR SECTARIANISM.—Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler suggests as a remedy for staying away from church in bad weather that Christians attend the churches nearest to them, of whatever denominations. One advantage of it would be the dulling the edge of sectarian prejudice. Another might be the breaking down the idolatry of "our minister."

ROMEWARD.—The *Weekly Register* (Roman Catholic) informs its readers that the doctrine of prayer for the dead is gradually assuming a more pronounced form in the Church of England. In proof of this a funeral hymn is quoted, from which the following is an extract:—

> "May the Ever Virgin Mother,—
> With all saints for ever pray,
> Pray for him, our sleeping brother,—
> Lord have mercy in that day."

FOR THE GIRLS.—Miss Muloch asks, "Can we not bring up our girls more usefully, less showily, less dependent on luxury and wealth? Can we not teach them from babyhood that to labour is a higher thing than merely to enjoy; that even enjoyment itself is never so sweet as when it is earned? Can we not put into their minds, whatever be their station, principles of truth, simplicity of taste, hopefulness, hatred of waste, and these being firmly rooted, trust to their blossoming up in whatever destiny the young maiden may be called?

PURITAN SURNAMES.—The following are given in a recently published work on English surnames, as specimens of the old Puritans in England about the year 1658. They are taken from a jury-list in Sussex County, and cannot fail to cause a smile in our day:—"Faint-not Hewet, Seek-wisdom Wood, Redeemed Compton, Accepted Trevor, God-reward Smart, Make-peace Heaton, Be-courteous Cole, Repentance Airs, Return Spelman, Killsin Pimple, Fly-debate Roberts, Be-faithful Sinner, Hope-for Rending, Weep-not Billings, Elected Mitchell, Fight-the-good-fight-of-faith White, Stand-fast-on-high Stringer, Search-the-Scriptures Morton, The Peace-of-God Knight."

TRANSFIGURATION.—George Macdonald suggests in the *Sunday Magazine* that the shining of the garments at our Lord's transfiguration was a type of the glorification of everything human when brought into its true relations to the present God.

WHEN DRUNK.—A Georgia judge has defined in terms when a man is legally drunk. Said he, "It is not necessary that a man should be wallowing in a ditch, or bumping his head against your posts, that you may know him to be drunk, but whenever he begins to tell the same thing over twice, then he's drunk!"

SCOTCH WIT.—A Scottish clergyman, happening to go into the churchyard while the beadle was employed neck-deep in digging a grave, thus accosted him: "Well, Saunders, that's a work you're employed in well calculated to make an old man like you thoughtful. I wonder you don't repent of your evil ways." The old worthy, resting on the head of his spade and taking a pinch of snuff, replied: "I thought, sir, ye ken'd that there was nae repentance in the grave."

A HOLY CITY.—A gentleman, who has just returned to Florence from a visit to Rome, describes the place as one in which squalor, filth, and barbarism are strangely contrasted with monumental splendour and the evidences of high civilisation. It may be compared, he says, to a dowdy, draggle-tailed, but richly-attired slattern, upon whose grimy fingers sparkle gems of the first water, and round whose pearl-encircled throat may be traced the water-line marking the extreme limit of the morning ablution. He noted a plethora of churches absolutely dazzling with the magnificence of their decorations, a few palaces of imposing architecture, and a multitude of mean and dingy dwelling-houses. The streets are narrow, tortuous, and ill-paved; the shops small, low, and decidedly provincial in character; heaps of garbage and filth of all sorts are suffered to accumulate unheeded in all but the principal thoroughfares, and the back slums—as, for instance, in the Ghetto or Jewry—present such a spectacle of neglect and wretchedness that the Camaldoli and the Old Market in Florence seems to the observer on his return quite gay and brilliant in comparison. The famous "odours of Rome" appeared to him to be a compound of the most villanous stenches in creation, for although there is everywhere an abundance of pure water, it never seems to be put to any use.

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